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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to improve the interpretative skills of 50 preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood teacher education program, to enable them to modify the curriculum to improve instruction for students with special needs placed in inclusive education settings. The preservice teachers lacked the ability to design appropriate learning environments with adaptations, modify curricula, gather appropriate facts from observations, and write modified lesson plans. Several strategies were used, including: (1) training in special adaptations and modifications for improving instruction; (2) training in creating a modified curriculum web; (3) incorporating interdisciplinary team training into the early childhood course; (4) improving observation skills for interpreting information for modifying lesson plans; (5) providing information on inclusive education models; and (6) using study circles. The strategies resulted in the preservice teachers' ability to create a modified curriculum web based on developmentally appropriate practices; to develop a 3-week instruction plan based on information obtained from an interdisciplinary team meeting report; to use observations skills for obtaining facts to help write a modified lesson plan; and to write journal abstracts on articles pertaining to curriculum modification for young special needs students. (Contains 40 references.) (CR)

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Improving Interpretative Skills of Preservice Teachers for Modifying Curriculum to Improve Instruction for Young Special Needs Students placed within Inclusive Education Settings

by

Sally L. Castle

Cluster 64

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A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
1996

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Sally L. Castle under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

6/7/96

Date of Final Approval of Report

Mary W. Staggs, Ed.D.

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I would like to thank my husband, Bill, for his loving support and encouragement during the writing and implementation of this practicum.

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ABSTRACT

Improving Interpretative Skills of Preservice Teachers for Modifying Curriculum to Improve Instruction for Young Special Needs Students placed within Inclusive Education Settings. Castle, Sally L., 1996: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Early Childhood Education/Preservice Teacher Education Programs/Special Education/Individualized Instruction/Curriculum Modification/Teacher Education Curriculum/Inclusive Education Settings

This practicum was developed to improve interpretative skills of preservice teachers for modifying curriculum to improve instruction for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The preservice teachers had limited observational techniques, lacked understanding of writing modified instructional plans, were unable to adapt learning environments or glean information for modifying curriculum from early childhood journal articles.

The writer developed a solution atrategy with five outcomes. The outcomes included designing an appropriate learning environment, modifying a curriculum web, developing an instructional plan from a team report, writing a modified lesson plan from classroom observation, and writng a journal abstract that included a discussion of curriculum modification ideas.

The results revealed four of five outcomes met. The solution strategy with outcomes enhanced the professional preparation of the fifty early childhood preservice teachers that participated in the practicum for teaching in an early childhood inclusive education setting.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The community was a small, midwestern, rural town with approximately 3,000 residents. The community was located near natural gorges where early wheat and corn grist mills used the natural waterfalls to turn the paddles of the mills. There were beautiful rolling hillsides with farms scattered along the rural countryside. The economics of the community were primarily based in farming and in the Christian college located within the community. The community was basically free of the social and violence problems of larger cities, and was spiritually rooted in the deep Christian influences of the local churches and the Christian college.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The work setting of the writer was located on the campus of the Christian college within the community. The college had the primary purpose of offering students an education consistent with Biblical truths. The college had an enrollment of nearly 2,400 students from

46 states and 14 nations. Many of the students had been raised in foreign countries as part of missionary families.

The college curriculum contained 75 areas of study. The area of studies included a liberal arts core curriculum, and a required Bible minor. A daily chapel service was an integral portion of the Bible requirement, and the heartbeat of the Christian college life. The daily chapel services were attended by all students, staff, and faculty.

One of the 75 areas of study was in the field of teacher training and education. It offerred instruction with the purpose of training preservice teachers for public, Christian, and missionary schools. The department had the second largest enrollment in the college. The teacher education program certified teachers in seven different areas of instruction. The preservice teachers were automatically certified by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) upon graduation. The teacher certification program included reciprocal agreements with 35 states.

One of the areas of instruction within the field of teacher education and training was the early childhood education area. Nine quarter hours and an elementary student teaching requirement (K-3) constituted the requirements in this area of curriculum concentration.

The writer's work setting was within the department

of education of this Christian college. The department had ten professors, two secretaries, and a department chairperson.

The writer's role within the education department was an assistant professor of special education. The role included teaching reading methods, special education, and early childhood education courses. The role also included being an advisor to special education majors.

The writer had a rich background for the responsiblities within the work setting. The background included a classroom teacher for 18 years, a reading department head for five years, a completed master's degree in special education, and a completed post-master's educational specialist degree in curriculum, supervision and instruction. The writer was presently enrolled in a doctoral program in child and youth studies. The writer was also a qualifed seminar speaker in topics relating to reading, curriculum, early childhood, and special education.

Many of the preservice teachers enrolled in the writer's early childhood courses had already been admitted to the teacher education program. They had completed foundation courses in education, achieved acceptable scores on the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST), and had a recommendation from the department's admissions interview committee.

The early childhood major consisted of two courses. The courses were offered on a rotating schedule so that one course was offered each quarter. The early childhood course was an introductory overview of the field of early childhood education. The second course was a methods and curriculum overview of early childhood education with a three week observation/field experience. The observation/field experience provided an opportunity for preservice teachers to observe and teach in a public school kindergarten classroom. The two courses gave additional state certification for teaching kindergarten.

It was the writer's responsibility to be a change agent within the work setting by helping to solve problems for the improvement of education and training of preservice teachers. The preservice teachers were the future teachers of the children attending school in the 21st century.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The problem was that early childhood education preservice teachers do not have the skills to interpret information for improving instruction of young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The interpretative skills that they learned focused on the average or normal student in the average or normal classroom.

The experiences in the field were also providing limited opportunities to demonstrate the few skills the preservice teachers do learn in the college classroom. The experiences in the field rarely included opportunities to visit or observe an inclusive education classroom.

Preservice teachers do not fully understand the terminology in working with special needs students. The terminology was often vague with variations of meanings and applications.

The number of preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood classes was low in comparison to the

total number of preservice teachers in the education department. The couses were taken if time permitted, or if there was an interest in requirements for kindergarten state certification. The elementary state certification was for first grade through eighth grade.

The number of preservice teachers taking special education courses was low. Again, the demands for concentration and education major requirements often allowed no time for enrollment in special education courses. The courses in this area were basically survey courses in nature or fragmented courses, such as career education, that dealt with a specific area of special education.

Preservice teachers had limited knowledge of what were inclusive education settings. There were few opportunities to learn about these settings first hand in the field. When the opportunities came, the settings were not consistent with textbook descriptions of them or with the state inclusive education models.

It was important to have a clear understanding of the terms within the problem description. The understanding of the terms provided a clearer picture of how the writer described the problem within the work setting. The terms were preservice teacher, special needs students, young students, and inclusive education settings. Preservice teachers were college students who enrolled in the teacher training program within the

department of education. Special needs students were students that differed from average or normal studetns in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, behavioral/emotional development, and/or physical characteristics. The students may or may not be under individualized educational programs. The difference required modifications in school practices and/or special education services. Young students were students with ages ranging from three to eight years in age. Inclusive education settings were educational settings varying along a continuum within the state inclusive models where special needs students were placed in the classroom with normal or average students. The special education teacher provided services for the special needs children that were under an I.E.P. within this setting or became a team member of a collaborative group that helped the teacher of the students implement the goals and objectives of the Individualized Educational Program.

The early childhood courses needed to provide course instruction that taught interpretative skills, and provided opportunities that demonstrated the skills in the field or in class. The skills were essential tools for improving instruction for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings.

Problem Documentation

The evidence for problem documentation surfaced from syllabi of previous early childhood education courses, interviews with other education professors, interviews with graduating early childhood majors, a survey of preservice teachers in the methods one and two courses, and the early childhood education course during the previous quarter of the academic year. The survey of the preservice teachers in the methods courses also showed information on preservice students who had already taken early childhood courses at some time during their teacher education experience.

A search of the previous two years of early childhood education course syllabi showed very few objectives for instruction in areas relating to interpretative skills for improving instruction. There was little evidence of the interpretative skills relating to using information from child observations, integrating developmentally appropriate practices during instruction, using information from collaborative/interdisciplinary teams, designing appropriate learning environments, and developing and understanding the terminology and models for inclusive education settings.

Interviews with other department professors who have taught methods courses revealed evidence that there

was limited instruction in developmentally appropriate practices. The practices were professionally associated with very young students before entrance to school.

A survey of preservice teachers in three methods courses showed a limited understanding of collaborative and interdisciplinary team skills. Using a Likert scale that tabulated responses, 65 preservice teachers shared their answers to the question of their overall understanding of collaboration, communication, and conferencing. Figure 1 showed the number of responses across the Likert scale. The Likert scale read as follows: 1(poor) 2(fair) 3(good) 4(very good) and 5(excellent).

Preservice Teacher Responses

1	2	3	4	5
9	20	24	9	1

Figure 1

The results of the survey on this question showed that only ten of 65 responses are above average in understanding of this area.

Another portion of the survey asked a "yes" or "no" response as to whether they had any training in this area. The survey showed 14 "yes" responses from a total of 65 responses.

The survey also conveyed a lack of understanding of what to look for during observation to improve instruction through lesson plan modification. The survey asked the preservice teachers if they had modified curriculum for a special needs student. The survey showed ten "yes" responses from a total of 65 responses.

Interviews with five graduating early childhood education majors shared concern about lack of understanding of inclusive education models, and curriculum adjustments relating to it. A common comment in all of the informal interviews talked about the inconsistencies and confusion of the state models, and lack of understanding of how to modify curriculum within inclusive education settings for young special needs students.

The writer concluded that the problem that preservice teachers do not have skills to interpret information for improving instruction of young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings does exist. The conclusion was based on the evidence from the early childhood education syllabi, surveys, and informal interviews.

Causative Analysis

The causes of the problem within the work setting were related to people, procedures, methods, and attitudes. An analysis of the causes showed nine

different areas.

The first cause related to the lack of training in early childhood education college curriculum of the adjunct instructors hired to teach the early childhood education courses in the several years prior to this past year.

Another cause for the problem was that curriculum tended to change slowly at all levels. There were so many different influences on curriculum, and the process of change was sometimes very slow.

There was a disregard of least restrictive environment in the field of early childhood education. Least restrictive environment was identified with elementary age students that were under an Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.). The term inclusion referred to serving special needs students in the least restrictive environment.

There was limited knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices, and how curriculum development correlated with it. Curriculum development and knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices walked hand-in-hand with appropriate instructional needs for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings.

Attitudinal differences over early identfication of young special needs students were evident within the work setting. The controversy extended to issues over

public school programs for special needs students with ages of three and four to allowing students time to develop and grow before placing labels on them.

Controversy continued to grow over state certification requirements for early childhood education majors. Early childhood education certification within the writer's work setting was presently kindergarten through grade three.

There was a lack of clear understanding of what interdisciplinary teaming and collaboration involved. There were so many different mentions of teaming in literature and textbooks with each one setting forth a different purpose.

There tended to be more of an emphasis on general education curriculum. One of the indicators was that a lower grade point average was required for early childhood education majors than for the other education major areas.

In summary, nine causes of the problem within the work setting were revealed. Each cause related to people, procedures, methods, and/or attitudes.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The review of related literature documented what other professionals had written about the problem. The relationship between the problem and related literature showed similarities of problems, evidences, and causes

with other professional writers in the early childhood area. The related literature showed various aspects of the problem, and related how other writers treated similar problems. Even though the writer's problem was reviewed based on the evidence and causes within the work setting, there was a marriage of commonness that related what other writers have done with similar problems in other work settings.

One area that related with the problem was developmentally appropriate practices. Developmentally appropriate practices most of the time had identity with students who were developing normally (Berkeley, & Ludlow, 1994). Some researchers claimed that a developmental model that related to developmentally appropriate practices was not the best practice for working with young special needs students. Special needs students required a focus on the "how" of developmental changes rather than on "what" happens "when". These researchers stated that there needed to be a reconceptualization of the developmental model so that developmentally appropriate practices could be suitable for all students rather than for just for the students who were developing normally (Carta; And Others, 1991).

The implications for curriculum modification for improving instruction caused indecisions as to how to adjust curriculum that included developmentally appropriate practices. Were developmentally appropriate

practices the best for young special needs students? Researchers were not in agreement concerning this matter. Where a researcher stood on this matter depended to some extent on what views on theories of child development the researcher believed in.

The separation of special education and early childhood certification programs in higher education fragmented efforts to train early childhood preservice teachers. This had an effect on the preservice teachers to instruct young special needs students successfully (Pugach, 1988).

Teacher education programs trained teachers to teach two types of students. The two types were normal and special students. Usually there was an offering of one course that presented a survey of the second group of students. The course provided limited information on curriculum and curriculum modification that met the needs of young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings (Welch, & Sheridan, 1993) & (Brown; And Others, 1991).

Some government leaders as well as some professionals in early childhood education proposed the combination or marriage of the special and general education programs into one program. The program prepared preservice teachers on how to educate all students. The merger proposal was commonly known as the Regular Education Initiative (Pugach, 1988). The

rationale for the merger was that special education had the solutions for moving educational reform in the correct direction.

The fragmentation was also evident within the fields of early childhood education (ECE) and early childhood special education (ECSE). The barriers came from differences in theories and philosophies relating to teaching children (Odom & McEvoy, 1990). The ECE field had a child-centered pedagogical framework whereas the ECSE field had a didactic framework relating to teacher-centered direct instruction.

Two states, North Carolina and Kentucky, were moving ahead by putting the standards for the two areas into one standard (Stayton & Miller, 1993). The certification was for implementing interdisciplinary preservice programs that trained the preservice teachers for working with young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The certification included the range from birth through kindergarten (B-K).

The preservice program included various areas of studies. The area of studies related to emergent literacy, early childhood curriculum, curriculum modification, designing learning environments, and interdisciplinary teaming.

Kentucky's program at Western Kentucky University offerred a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Early

Childhood Education (B-5). North Carolina's program at Appalachian State University was an undergraduate degree under the Department of Home Economics and Child Development.

The two states understood the implications and issues of professional unification to higher education, and saw it as beneficial in many different areas. One benefit was an answer to the ramifications of the passage of P.L. 99-457 for a higher number of qualified teachers to work with young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings (Miller, 1992).

Two organizations were helping in this matter. The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Association of Teacher Educators had developed a position statement on early childhood teacher education adopted in 1991. It called for a distinct certification in early childhood to provide consistent standards (NAEYC, 1991). The position statement helped individual states to better develop certification requirements for a higher provision of qualified early childhood education teachers (Bredekamp, 1990) & (Marx & Seligson, 1988).

With the passage of such laws as P.L. 99-457, many three-four year olds would be eligible for services. This tied in with the position statement mentioned above to help provide the additional qualified early childhood

teachers to service these young students.

Many early childhood education preschools were not cognizant of the ramifications of serving young special needs students (Burton; And Others, 1992). Also, many researchers voiced fear over what the unprepared public schools were going to do with these young special needs students.

Part of the unprepared state of the public school and other early childhood preschool programs was the issue of curriculum (McLean, 1990). Even though it was true that students were more similar than different, these students had a wide range of needs that even the best instruction would not meet the needs of the more severe special needs students.

This concern was becoming more real as over 44 states now have mandated for special education services for students as young as age three (Burton; And Others, 1992). Not only were there state mandates, but there were 35 or more states that had established public school programs for students of these early ages.

Mandates were having another effect of pushing public schools to react with little consideration to curriculum and program development as well as consistency of programs. As a result, many professional groups, such as NAEYC, were taking the lead by recommending standards for developing and guiding public school early childhood practices and programs.

The early childhood education area had many curriculums that were good for working with normal or average students. A review of related literature showed very few curriculums for young early childhood special needs students. There was no one curriculum that met the needs of all young special needs students (Seefeldt, 1987). Educators mostly used strategies with these students that they knew worked from practical experiences using the strategies.

Another factor relating to the curriculum was state mandates that tended to place less importance on curriculum development and curriculum modifications within individual classrooms to meet the needs of individual special needs students (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1988). It needed to be remembered here that the teacher needed to be the builder of curriculum, not state mandates.

Many preservice teachers were not aware of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This association had a position statement of guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving students ages three through eight (NAEYC, 1990). It helped teachers to plan curriculum that was based on best theories about learning, and best practices about teaching. The association placed curriculum content and assessment side-by-side in their position statement as they were

part of a necessary match. The association's next step was resources and strategies implementation of curriculum. Resources and strategies were tools for determining age, individually appropriate age and individually appropriate curriculum content.

The important thing to remember as far as curriculum was matching the curriculum to the students rather than matching the student to the curriculum. It was very important that the needs of students were first in the order of priorities.

The role of teachers in developing curriculum for early childhood was changing due to the needs of diverse populations, and students with special needs. The role included the skills to make adaptations in curriculum to meet these special needs (Worthan, 1994).

Additional pressure was placed on this changing role with the effects of educational reform on early childhood curriculum. There was the matter of higher level curriculum being "pushed down" to the early childhood age level. Schools were issuing priorities for higher test grades causing modification in curriculum to help ensure success on tests (Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989). The curriculum modification became developmentally inappropriate for students, because it placed the responsibilities on the student to fit the curriculum.

This review of related literature shared research

about the inappropriate practices that teachers wrestled with when viewed with best theories of learning and best practices of teaching. One inappropriate practice was testing young students for placement and retention. Another inappropriate practice was the curriculum problem. The changing role forced decisions on the early childhood educator to often use an academic curriculum in their classrooms. This problem placed even more academic pressure on young special needs students who already faced the many problems that having special needs brings into their young lives.

With the situation of possibly more academics in early childhood programs, the preservice teachers needed to have more skills to develop instruction and modify curriculum for the young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings (Brown, 1994). One additional problem was that preservice teachers do not have many opportunities in field experience to practice skills that they need to develop. Various conditions such as scheduling, transportation needs, and low priority in teacher preparation curriculum made field experiences limitative in nature sometimes.

New laws and reforms, such as the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA), included provisions for collaboration between regular and special education teachers for improving the quality of instruction. This did not occur without the development of guidelines for

role responsibilities, and a system of collaboration with interdisciplinary teams (Phillips & McCullough, 1990).

Another problem with roles was that educators do not know the roles with interdisciplinary teaming (Courtnage & Smith, 1987) & (West & Brown, 1987). It was important that the collaborative process between special education and general education began at the preservice level. Preservice teachers needed to learn that they do not need to make important decisions alone concerning students. For this to occur, preservice teacher training programs needed to teach them the various roles in interdisciplinary teaming. Schools of higher education needed to take the lead role that determined team responsibilities based on best practices rather thatn individual school systems developing the role profiles.

In summary, the review of related literature confirmed the need to deal with the problem of early childhood preservice teachers not having interpretative skills to modify curriculum for the improvement of instruction for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goal and Expectations

The following goal and outcomes were projected for this outcome. The goal was that early childhood preservice teachers will demonstrate skills to interpret information for improving instruction of young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings.

Expected Outcomes

The following five outcomes were developed for this practicum to measure whether the practicum goal had been successfully completed:

1. Preservice teachers will be able to design an appropriate learning environment with at least five special adaptations for improving instruction.
2. Preservice teachers will be able to create a modified curriculum web with at least eight subject areas based on developmentally appropriate practices.

3. Preservice teachers will be able to develop a three-week instruction plan for a young special needs student based on information obtained after reviewing an interdisciplinary team meeting report.
4. Preservice teachers will be able to use improved observation skills for obtaining four facts to help write a modified lesson plan.
5. Preservice teachers will be able to write four journal abstracts on articles pertaining to curriculum modification for young special needs students.

Measurement of Outcomes

Designing a learning environment plan, modifying a curriculum web, writing an instruction plan, developing a modified lesson plan, and writing journal abstracts were the five activities that were used to measure the outcomes of this practicum. The measurement tools of the various outcomes were designed for appropriate use at various points within each of the two early childhood courses along the timeline of the eight-month implementation period of this practicum.

The measurement of the outcome one was a learning environment. The measurement involved creating an appropriate inclusive education classroom learning

environment on graph paper that showed at least five special adaptations that helped improve instruction for a young special needs student (see Appendix A). The learning environment design was created for a young student in one of the categories of special needs. The preservice teacher chose the category of the special needs child.

During the course work, the preservice teachers developed skills on designing appropriate learning environments for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The skills included assistive technology, and instruction on various things to look for in a learning environment when considering different categories of special needs students. The categories included special needs of students that differed from average or normal children in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, behavioral/emotional development, and/or physical characteristics.

The measurement of the outcome for the modified curriculum web was creating a modified curriculum web with eight subject areas based on developmentally appropriate practices for a young special needs student placed within an inclusive education setting (see Appendix C). The preservice teacher chose one of the categories of special needs. The modified curriculum web was created for this student.

During the methods course, the preservice teachers constructed curriculum webs. The construction of the webs was a continuous project incorporating individual subject areas after instruction in class concerning that area. During the individual subject area instruction times, the preservice teachers also learned how to modify the webs for young students in the different categories of special needs.

The measurement of the outcome for the instruction plan was developing a three-week instruction plan based on information obtained from an interdisciplinary team report (see Appendix F).

The preservice teachers learned about different interdisciplinary teams in class. A school psychologist came to class to share information about interdisciplinary teams.

The measurement tool involved developing a three-week instruction plan for a young special needs student. The instruction plan was developed after the preservice teacher read a report written by an interdisciplinary team concerning a young special needs student placed within an inclusive education setting. The instruction plan included specific information outlined on a generic lesson plan form.

The measurement of the outcome for the modified lesson plan was writing a modified lesson plan based on four facts learned from observing a young special needs

student placed within an inclusive education setting (see Appendix G).

During the course work of the two early childhood education classes, the preservice teachers learned about the observation process, different types of observation, and evaluated various observation forms. During the courses, the preservice teachers observed a minimum of three times in an inclusive education setting where young special needs students were placed.

The measurement tool was a modified lesson plan with the four facts listed from the observation included within the plan. The preservice teacher chose one observed student, and wrote a modified lesson plan for improving instruction for that student.

The measurement of the outcome for the increase of knowledge about curriculum modification for young special needs students within inclusive education settings was writing four journal abstracts (see Appendix I). One journal abstract was written every two weeks during the early childhood education course.

The measurement tool worked with three areas. The first area was an abstract of the article following the APA format for writing article abstracts. The second area was specific information about curriculum modification gleaned from the articles. The third area was a reflective/inquiry paragraph involving the thoughts of the preservice teacher about the article.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

As described through the pages of this practicum, early childhood preservice teachers do not have the necessary interpretative skills to modify curriculum for improving instruction for young special needs students place within inclusive education settings. This lack of skills was seen in designing appropriate learning environments with adaptations, modifying curriculum, and gathering appropriate facts from observation to write a modified lesson plan. It was also seen in developing instructional plans based on information obtained from an interdisciplinary team meeting as well as a general lack of understanding of what exactly inclusive education settings were.

Some possible solution strategies for the problem within the work setting surfaced from reviewing the related literature. Other strategies for possible solutions came forth from a combination of reflection by the writer upon reading the literature with what personal ideas were already there. A third possible

source of solution strategies came from personal ideas alone of what might help the problem from just having a personal knowledge of the problem within the work setting, and a professional background in early childhood and special education.

The first possible solution strategy from the literature review was a module concept used by a special education center that helped early childhood educators learn to work with young special needs children placed within inclusive education settings (Pisarchick; And Others, 1992). Project Prepare used nine competency-based modules relating to areas of assessment, collaboration, Individualized Education Programs, preschool integration, managing behaviors, planning, play, technology, and transition. Each module had specific goals with related objectives, and competency components. Training sessions for each module provided a flexible format. The module concept was very adaptable to any training situation including preservice teacher training.

Another possible solution strategy from literature was the competency-based transdisciplinary approach (Siders; And Others, 1987). The approach provided courses with appropriate field experiences during each of the courses. The curriculum addressed six areas of competencies with related field experiences. The areas were leadership services, teaching, team functioning,

family systems, program development/intervention, and research/evaluative skills. Part of this preservice teacher training program was that the preservice teacher received training across many disciplines, and receiveda degree in Master of Education with an early intervention concentration.

Another possible solution strategy from the related literature review was computer simulations as a method of providing training for preservice and inservice teacher education (Brown, 1994). There were many logistical problems related to providing an optimal field experience for preservice teachers to learn skills. The problems ranged from scheduling to a lack of placements for preservice teachers in inclusive education settings. This solution strategy was more related to diagnosing learning disabilities through case study analysis using computer simulations in this review, but it was a strategy that could be used in other training areas of preservice teacher education.

A solution strategy that was a major focus within educational reform is creating more of a partnership between the general and special education departments on college and university campuses. The University of Utah had a new program with this kind of a partnership as the foundation of the program (Welch & Sheridan, 1993). This strategy benefited young special needs children as it developed skills and gave training for general

educators to work with special needs children. This program provided three components. Two of the components were university courses. The two courses were Educational Partnerships: Serving Exceptional Students and Collaborative Educational Problem-Solving and Conflict Management. The second course offerred skills on how to modify curriculum and adapt instruction for young special needs children placed within inclusive education settings. The third component was involvement in the STEP Project. This project was a federally-funded project that helped preservice teachers demonstrate skills within a field experience setting.

Another solution strategy from the related literature was an early field experience with a reflective approach for skills training (Stone, 1987). Preservice teachers worked with special needs children out in the field on specific instructional skills under controlled conditions to ensure a connection between theory and practice. Skills were learned from reflection with feedback and follow-through reinforcement. It was based on Reflective Teaching, a preservice instructional program (Cruickshank; And Others, 1986). The program also involved teaching mini-lessons followed by group conversations for immediate feedback.

Another solution strategy from literature was interdisciplinary team training within the preservice training program. A survey of teacher-training programs

revealed a low number of programs offering training in interdisciplinary team training (Courtnage & Smith-Davis, 1987). The survey showed the frequency of different team training components, such as prereferral activities occurring in the courses and practica. The recommendation was for interdisciplinary team meetings in field experiences. Another way of learning collaborative skills was through a preservice teacher training model using collaboration (Williams; And Others, 1993). The model, Project Raise, included pairing a veteran teacher with a preservice or novice teacher where both partners attended school under a government grant program.

One solution strategy from the literature and an idea of the writer was involving updating of the early childhood teacher education syllabi with new theoretical and philosophical underpinnings in a move towards preparing preservice teachers to function within inclusive education settings (Sapon-Shevin, 1990). The new syllabi showed a consolidation of the two fragmented courses into one preparation program for early childhood education. The new syllabi reflected the preparation of preservice teachers to be able to instruct all children, and not reflect the classification of children into normal and special students (Meier, 1992). This syllabi update included accommodating differences within inclusive settings (Schickedanz; And Others, 1990).

Another personal idea coming from literature was the use of curriculum webs (Workman & Anziano, 1993). Curriculum webs supported the developmental approach with inclusion of developmentally appropriate practices. A curriculum web was a tool that was used to help modify instruction for young special needs children. Curriculum webs incorporated the interests of the children, and laid groundwork for incorporation of areas such as cognitive, affective, and social processes.

One word that kept popping up in the writer's thoughts and in related literature about a possible solution strategy was observation. There was a common thread between the related literature and the college textbooks also (Morrison, 1991) & (Eliason & Jenkins, 1994). The related literature and textbooks referred to observation in various ways, but usually as one aspect of an overall plan involving understanding, planning, observation, and recording (Stainback & Stainback 1992). Both sources mentioned the process or steps of observation, but not really on how to "see" children, and gathering appropriate facts for modifying curriculum to adapt instruction for young special needs children placed within inclusive education settings.

Another solution strategy gleaned from literature and personal thoughts about the problem was instruction within the early childhood courses on the role of the preservice teacher as a curriculum developer (Worthan,

1994). This role took into account the need to incorporate a broader range of curriculum to meet needs of not only young special needs children, but also the needs of children from multicultural backgrounds and children from diverse family environments. Curriculum needed to fit the children rather than the other way around. The role of the preservice teacher in curriculum matters was to find ways, based on best theories about learning and best practices about teaching, to tailor the fit of the child to curriculum.

Curriculum modification, adapting environment, and various interpretative skills helped the preservice teacher in this role. A solution strategy would be to enhanced interpretative skills of preservice teachers for curriculum modification to improve instruction for young special needs children placed within inclusive education settings.

A personal solution strategy was including information on position statements of curriculum content/assessment, as well as early childhood teacher certification, to the program of early childhood preservice teacher education (NAEYC, 1990) & (NAEYC, 1991). The position statements offerred foundational information on best theories for learning, and best practices for teaching in the form of a position statement.

Description and Justification of Solution Selected

The goal of the practicum was that early childhood preservice teachers will demonstrate skills to interpret information for improving instruction of young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The description and justification of the solutions for obtainment of this goal were presented here.

The first solution strategy was designing appropriate learning environments for young special needs children with special adaptations to help improve instruction. The preservice teachers learned the basic principles for designing an environment, and in addition learned special adaptations for children under the four categories of special needs students. The preservice teacher practiced designing environments within these four categories throughout the early childhood methods course.

The justification for this strategy was that young special needs students needed the adaptations within their learning environment. The adaptations helped make the environment appropriate for instruction and learning to take place within the inclusive education setting.

The second solution strategy was instruction on creating a modified curriculum web. During the early childhood methods course, individual academic subject areas were studied with questions relating to

developmentally appropriate practices. As each of the areas were introduced, the preservice teachers added to a basic curriculum web relating to a chosen theme. They modified the web for a young special needs student chosen from one of the four categories of special needs.

The justification of this strategy was that curriculum webs were developmentally appropriate for early childhood education. Webs also gave foundational structure for development of curriculum for both normal children and special needs students.

The third solution strategy was incorporation of interdisciplinary team training into the early childhood course for helping to develop instructional plans for young special needs students. As part of this solution strategy, a school psychologist was a guest speaker within the class. Also, the preservice teachers will read anonymous interdisciplinary team reports of young special needs students, and gleaned facts from the reports for instructional planning.

The justification for the solution strategy was the increase in the use of interdisciplinary teaming within the field due to the increase in the number of American classrooms using the inclusive education model. This model required the teaming of professionals to help the young special needs students placed within these settings.

Improving observation skills to interpret

information for modifying a lesson plan was the fourth solution strategy. During the implementation period, the preservice teachers observed young special needs students. The preservice teachers gleaned facts from the observations to modify lesson plans.

The justification for this solution strategy was that many teacher education courses talked about observation as a method of evaluation, but not how to use the facts for improving instruction. Preservice teachers needed to know "what" to look for during observation time.

Information on the inclusive education models, curriculum within these models, and NAEYC position statements on curriculum and assessment was another solution strategy for obtainment of the practicum goal. During the early childhood education course, the preservice teachers read information on these area from appropriate professional journals. This information fitted together as an appropriate solution strategy.

The justification for this solution was the relationship between these three areas for using best theories about learning and best practices about teaching for curriculum modification and instructional planning. It was also in the relationship of the three areas of appropriate instruction for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings.

The last solution strategy was the use of study

circles within the early childhood courses to talk about issues and controversies relating to curriculum, meeting special needs of young students, and inclusive education settings. The issues and controversies included early identification, academic kindergartens, least restrictive environments, impact of federal laws, public preschool education programs, retention, and discrepancies in teacher education programs for early childhood teacher certification requirements.

The justification for this solution strategy was the preservice teacher became aware of the controversy within the early childhood field relating to certain issues. Out of awareness came the ability to reflect and inquire upon development of a philosophy of early childhood education in general and implications to early childhood inclusive education settings.

Report of Action Taken

The solution strategies were implemented within several days of the timeline established for completing the five outcomes for this practicum project. Laying out the practicum strategies on an eight month calendar plan kept the implementation process flowing smoothly.

Several minor adjustments were made along the way. One of the adjustments related to weather conditions that caused the closings of schools due to extreme heat during the first few days of the implementation period,

and then imclement weather for nearly a week midway in the implementation process.

The first solution strategy was designing appropriate learning environments for young special needs students using special adaptations and modifications for improving instruction. This solution strategy was carried out during the kindergarten methods course. First, the writer taught the early childhood preservice teachers basic guidelines for adaptations in the four areas of special needs students described in an earlier chapter of this practicum report. These basic guidelines related directly to the overall characteristics of each of the four areas. The preservice teachers then learned more specific adaptations and modifications that related to the thirteen categories of special needs defined by the federal government. It was at this point that the preservice teachers learned about the thirteen categories.

After the preservice teachers learned about the guidelines and categories, they were placed in cooperative learning groups. The writer then gave them scenarios of young special needs students, and told them to sketch a classroom that noted special adaptations to the learning environment. The learning environment was not just the physical arrangement, but also the equipment needed for improving instruction. This

activity provided an opportunity for practicing the skills they acquired through instruction to a scenario situation.

The final portion of this strategy involved one of the practicum outcomes. The preservice teachers visited an inclusive kindergarten classroom. During the visit, they observed special needs students, and noted the adaptations and modifications to the learning environment for the students. The outcome involved the preservice teachers sketching the classroom, and making the provisions for a new special needs students placed within the classroom. The category of the special needs was chosen by the preservice teacher. They made the adaptations for the learning environment on their sketch. They also wrote short descriptions of any special adaptations for learning such as the use of assistive technology.

The second solution strategy was instruction on creating a modified curriculum web. This solution strategy was carried out during the kindergarten methods course.

The preservice teachers acquired skills for creating a developmentally appropriate curriculum web for a kindergarten class. The web was a required assignment within the methods class. The preservice teachers were told to choose a theme for their curriculum web. Then, throughout the course, the

preservice teachers were taught about ten different academic subject areas. The preservice teachers were required to develop two activities for each of the ten academic areas.

The modification of a curriculm web was one of the outcomes for this practicum project. During instruction in the individual academic areas of the curriulum web, the writer shared strategies for modifying the curriculum for young special needs students. The preservice teachers were given a choice of three different options for the completion of this outcome. The choices included modifying a curriculum web for a special needs student that was observed while visiting the inclusive kindergarten classroom, using their scenario situation, or visiting another early childhood inclusive educational setting. The one guideline was that they had to use and modify the curriculum web with the related activities created for the course assignment.

The third solution strategy was the incorporation of interdisciplinary team training into the early childhood course for helping to develop instructional plans for young special needs student. The strategy involved a practicum outcome of obtaining information from team meeting and psychological reports for modifying curriculum for improving instruction. An additional aspect of this strategy was a school

psychologist being a guest speaker in the class.

The preservice teachers reviewed team and psychological reports of special needs students ages three through eight. The reports were made anonymous by removing the names of the students, school systems, and any other information pertinent to the anonyminity of the students. The writer was responsible for ensuring confidentiality in this matter.

The writer showed the preservice teachers what information in these reports were important for obtaining information for modifying curriculum to improve instruction for the student. It was the first time that many of the preservice teachers ever saw a confidential report. They had heard about them in their Introduction to Education course, but that was the extent of their knowledge.

The school psychologist shared some guidelines for working with interdisciplinary teams and psychological reports. She emphasized the importance of collaboration and communication with other professionals.

After the visit from the school psychologist, the next step in this solution strategy was for the class to work in cooperative learning groups. Each group used copies of just one report. They were told to read the report carefully by themselves. Then, as a team, they wrote an instructional plan for the student. This actually allowed them practice in writing a plan, and

working as a collaborative team group.

After the group experience, each of the preservice teachers wrote a three-week instructional plan from individual reports for use within an early childhood inclusive education setting. This plan became one of the outcomes for this practicum.

The fourth solution strategy was improving observation skills for interpreting information for modifying a lesson plan. The fourth strategy had an outcome of writing a modified lesson plan for a special needs student based on observation. This outcome was completed in both of the early childhood education classes.

The preservice teachers were instructed on purposes of observations, and various methods of recording observations. The format used for the outcome was one that had steps listed for purposeful evaluations. The steps included understanding, planning, observing, and recording with reflective questions on each of the steps.

After instruction, the preservice teachers observed in a preschool class. They used one of the methods learned about in class for recording observation. They were able to choose their own recording method. This gave them an opportunity to observe and record as well.

The last step was a visit to an inclusive kindergarten class where they had an opportunity to

observe special needs students. Based on the observation of the lesson being taught, they wrote the next lesson with appropriate modifications for one of the special needs students observed within the classroom.

The fifth solution strategy provided information on inclusive education models, NAEYC position statements on curriculum and assessment, and sharing information on curriculum from appropriate professional journals. The review of articles showed a relationship between using best theories about learning, and best practices about teaching when planning for curriculum modification and instructional planning for special students. Many of these articles showed developmentally appropriate practices also.

In the early childhood course, the preservice teachers researched at least four articles relating to the areas mentioned in the solution strategy. Using APA guidelines for writing abstracts, the preservice teachers wrote four abstracts of articles they had read. As part of this outcome, they also discussed the article, and things they learned about curriculum modification.

The last solution strategy was using study circles that were implemented at appropriate points in the early childhood course. The circles talked about early identification, academic kindergartens, retention, and early intervention. One of the study circles was held at

an early intervention center after a tour and talk by the director of the center. Very few of the preservice teachers even knew that early intervention centers existed, and the kind of work they do with young special needs students.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The problem within the work setting was that early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood teacher education program do not have interpretative skills to modify curriculum for improving instruction for young special needs students placed within inclusive education settings. The preservice teachers used limited observational techniques, lacked understanding of writing modified instructional plans from information obtained in team meetings, and were unable to adapt learning environments. They also lacked skills to incorporate modified areas into curriculum webs, and glean information on modifying curriculum from early childhood journal articles.

The solution strategy involved equiping the fifty early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood teacher education program during the implementation period with interpretative skills to modify curriculum for improving instruction. There were

five outcomes written for this practicum for implementation and completion of the solution strategy. An example of each of the outcomes of this practicum was placed in the appendix portion of this practicum report.

The following five outcomes were projected:

1. By the end of the implementation period, the early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the kindergarten methods class will be able to design an appropriate learning environment with at least five special adaptations for improving instruction.

This outcome was not met.

Fourteen of twenty-five preservice teachers made five or more adaptations in design for an appropriate learning environment. Ten of thirteen federal special education categories were represented in this outcome (see Appendix B).

2. By the end of the implementation period, the early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the kindergarten methods class will be able to create a modified curriculum web with at least eight subject areas based on developmentally appropriate practices.

This outcome was met.

All twenty-five preservice teachers created a modified curriculum web with eight or more subject areas. Nine of thirteen federal special education categories were represented in this outcome (see Appendix D).

3. By the end of the implementation period, the early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood class will be able to develop a three-week instruction plan for a young special needs student based on information obtained after reviewing an interdisciplinary team meeting report.

This outcome was met.

Fifteen of twenty-five preservice teachers developed a three-week instruction plan. Ten of thirteen federal special education categories were represented in this outcome (see Appendix F). Three of twenty-five preservice teachers developed instructional plans after visiting an early intervention center that was part of a field trip in the early childhood class. Their plans were based on exposure to anonymous IFSP plans that were shared by the director of the center.

4. By the end of the implementation period, the early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in both the early childhood and kindergarten classes will be able to use improved observation skills for obtaining four facts to help write a modified lesson plan.

This outcome was met.

Thirty of fourty-five preservice teachers were able to obtain four facts from observation to write a modified lesson plan. Eleven of thirteen special education categories were presented in this outcome (see Appendix H).

5. By the end of the implementation period, the early childhood preservice teachers enrolled in the early childhood class will be able to write four journal abstracts on articles pertaining to curriculum modification for young special needs students.

This outcome was met.

Nineteen of twenty-five preservice teachers were able to write an abstract from a journal article, and glean information from the article on curriculum modification for young special needs students (see Appendix J).

Unexpected Outcomes

The early childhood preservice teachers involved in these practicum outcomes had limited knowledge about curriculum. They knew about learning and foundations of teaching from their college classes, but not about curriculum in general. An unexpected outcome was the preservice teachers learning about curriculum as it related to developmentally appropriate practices for young special needs students.

Another unexpected outcome was the knowledge and career exploration from exposure of the preservice teachers to the field of early intervention. The early childhood class went to an early intervention center as a field trip. It was quite evident that several of the preservice teachers were very interested in becoming

certified to teach in this area. With the critical shortage of certified early intervention teachers, this would be a wonderful unexpected outcome of this practicum implementation.

Discussion

The early childhood preservice teachers who participated in the various activities of this practicum were very enthusiastic about being involved in the implementation process of the five outcomes. They were enthusiastic, because they knew the activities for the outcomes covered areas such as teaming and curriculum modification that they had very limited professional knowledge about.

The first outcome involved developing skills for improving instruction by adapting a learning environment for a special needs student. One of the assignments within the regular coursework of the kindergarten methods class was to sketch an early childhood classroom using the guidelines from the class textbook and class lecture. After this assignment was completed, the preservice teachers learned about special adaptations relating to the four general areas of special needs that included mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, behavioral/emotional development, and/or physical characteristics. Then the writer included information concerning specific

adaptations for some of the thirteen special education federal categories.

The preservice teachers enjoyed this activity. By the time they went into an inclusive education kindergarten setting, they felt comfortable knowing about special adaptations. They were able to observe in a public school system that was considered a state model kindergarten facility for inclusive education kindergarten classrooms, regular kindergarten classrooms, and preschool classrooms for special needs students ages 3-5. All of their kindergarten students were housed in one building that they called the kindergarten village.

The one area that needed further guidelines was the difference between adaptations for improving instruction, and for making the physical environment more enduring for the special needs student. This practicum outcome was directed towards instructional improvement. Some of the preservice teachers had difficulty distinguishing between the two.

The second outcome consisted of modifying a curriculum web for a young special needs student. Workman and Anziano (1993) stated that curriculum webs supported the developmental approach with inclusion of developmentally appropriate practices.

First, the early childhood preservice teachers learned about developmentally appropriate curriculum by

studying the NAEYC position statement on curriculum and assessment (1991), and reading the chapter in the course textbook about curriculum. Then, they completed a curriculum web using a theme of their choice. The curriculum web was an assignment of the regular coursework.

The second part of this activity was modifying the curriculum web for a young special needs student. Most of the preservice teachers chose the same special needs student that they observed as part of the first outcome. They learned that many of the subject areas did not need to be modified.

The modification of the curriculum web was a difficult outcome, but all of them completed it. Some of the difficulty came from their general lack of basic knowledge about the curriculum path of goals, objectives, scope/sequence, content, and evaluation. The early childhood courses were 200 level courses that were usually taken before the 300 level methods courses. Many of the ideas for curriculum modification came from familarity with their chosen theme, and the creative abilities of the preservice teachers. An awareness of the individual characteristics of the special needs areas also helped to make this outcome a valuable instructional tool.

The third outcome related to learning skills to use information obtained in team meetings to improve the

instruction of young special needs students. Courtnage and Smith-Davis (1987) revealed a lower number of college programs offering training in interdisciplinary teaming. With the increase in the number of inclusive education settings, early childhood preservice teachers needed to know how teaming related to improved instruction.

The preservice teachers were exposed to anonymous confidential team and psychological reports. After reading the reports, the class discussed several of the reports with the writer acting as the team leader. The discussion included how the information from the reports were integrated into practical instructional plans for use in an inclusive education setting. It became evident to the preservice teachers that sometimes reports were difficult to put into a practical teaching context. It took experience and the development of interpretative skills to effectively do this.

Then, the preservice teachers picked a special needs category and an instructional area. They determined the team members involved based on the special needs area. The preservice teachers wrote a three-week instructional plan using the information obtained from the team reports or a special scenairo situation developed by them.

The fourth outcome related to developing skills for obtaining facts from observation for lesson plan

modification. Stainback and Stainback (1992) constructed an observation plan that included areas of understanding, planning, observing, and recording. The first portion asked the observer questions relating to each of the four areas. This first portion prepared the preservice student for knowing what constituted a good observation. The majority of them considered observing to be basically sitting in the back of the classroom watching students.

The writer spent classroom time sharing the various purposes of observation, methods of recording, and how to obtain information for writing modified lesson plans for young special needs students. This information was presented in both college courses even though there was some overlapping. The writer felt it was so important that the early childhood preservice teachers knew how to observe. Observation was os closely linked with developmentally appropriate curriculum and assessment.

The preservice teachers observed a young special needs student within an inclusive education setting. They wrote down four facts that were helpful for writing a modified lesson plan for the student. A lesson plan was developed based on the information obtained from the observation.

The preservice teachers remarked on how differently they felt about this observation experience. The exposure to the various purposes, methods of recording,

and the general knowledge they learned about observation helped them realize the importance of this outcome to the development of their professional skills in modifiying curriculum and evaluating students.

The early childhood preservice teachers wrote article abstracts for the fifth outcome. Each abstract had six sections. The six sections were APA heading, introduction, method, results, discussion, and information from the article on curriculum modification.

The preservice teachers searched for four articles that focused on early childhood curriculum and special needs students. They wrote abstracts on the articles using APA format. The last part of the outcome was pulling information from the article that was appropriate for curriculum modification. Some of the articles focused directly on federal special education categories.

The preservice students shared the information found in the articles on various curriculum modification strategies with their classmates. It was a very informative extension activity connected with the outcome.

Recommendations

The priority of giving early childhood preservice teachers the skills that they need to be effective

teachers within an inclusive education setting was essential. After the writer researched, wrote, implemented, and evaluated the outcomes of this practicum, there were recommendations that surfaced for improvement in various areas of the practicum.

1. Include a brief overview of special education to the preservice teachers during the first week of the practicum. Review the federal categories so that they are familar with them.
2. Make sure that the preservice teachers know the proper use and meanings of terms relating to inclusion. Many of the preservice teachers thought such terms as mainstreaming, full inclusion, and inclusion were the same.
3. Explain the differences between the many different kinds of team meetings that were involved in special education. Some of the literature they read used terms such as child study teams, multi-disciplinary teams, interdisciplinary teams, and intervention-assistance teams as meaning the same thing. This terminology, along with terms relating to inclusion, was confusing to them.
4. Schedule meetings with the cooperating kindergarten teachers for explaining the outcomes of the practicum that were directly implemented within their classrooms. They were

very interested in learning more about them, but there was no time scheduled to do it.

5. Keep the other faculty members within your department updated on the progress of the implementation of the practicum. The majority of them wrote dissertations, but were not aware of a theory-to-practice practicum. They were very interested in the process, and the features of implementing the practicum outcomes within the work setting. Make the practicum report available to them for review.
6. Relate the outcomes more directly to the lesson plans using such resources as the state early childhood curriculum, or curriculum resources put out by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
7. Be sure that adjustments were made in the regular course assignments so that the preservice teachers do not feel overwhelmed with regular class assignments, and involvement with practicum outcomes.

Dissemination

The writer of this practicum concluded with ideas for dissemination of information within this report.

1. Use of the information obtained from the research, writing, and implementation of this

practicum for continued improvement of the early childhood program at the college.

2. Talk with local public schools about seminars for their kindergarten teachers on observation skills, curriculum modification for young special needs students, and the differences between an early childhood and elementary inclusive education settings.
3. Develop a proposal for the possible expansion of the early childhood program at the college into areas of early childhood special education, and Birth-Age 8 certification. The purpose of the proposal was to not only plan possible expansion, but to also help make the transition to new state certification requirements easier when they become a reality.
4. Present seminars at the next American Christian Schools International (A.C.S.I.) midwestern conference on topics relating to this practicum.
5. Request that the practicum abstract be placed in the campus faculty newsletter.
6. Contact the college representative in charge of Internet home pages for the college to incorporate the outcomes of the practicum in the personal area devoted to the early childhood program within the department of education home page.

7. Organize the curriculum web outcomes as a basis for publication of an article on curriculum modification in an early childhood education journal.

8. Send an abstract of the practicum to the Council for Exceptional Children headquarters as notification of successful outcomes for improving instruction within early childhood inclusive education settings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FORM

CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Kind of Classroom: _____

Age of Special Needs Child _____ I.E.P. ___yes
___no

Special Needs Area _____

Additional Information _____

_____

Adaptations:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

CLASSROOM

APPENDIX B

CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT EXAMPLE

CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Kind of Classroom: Extended Day Inclusion kindergarten

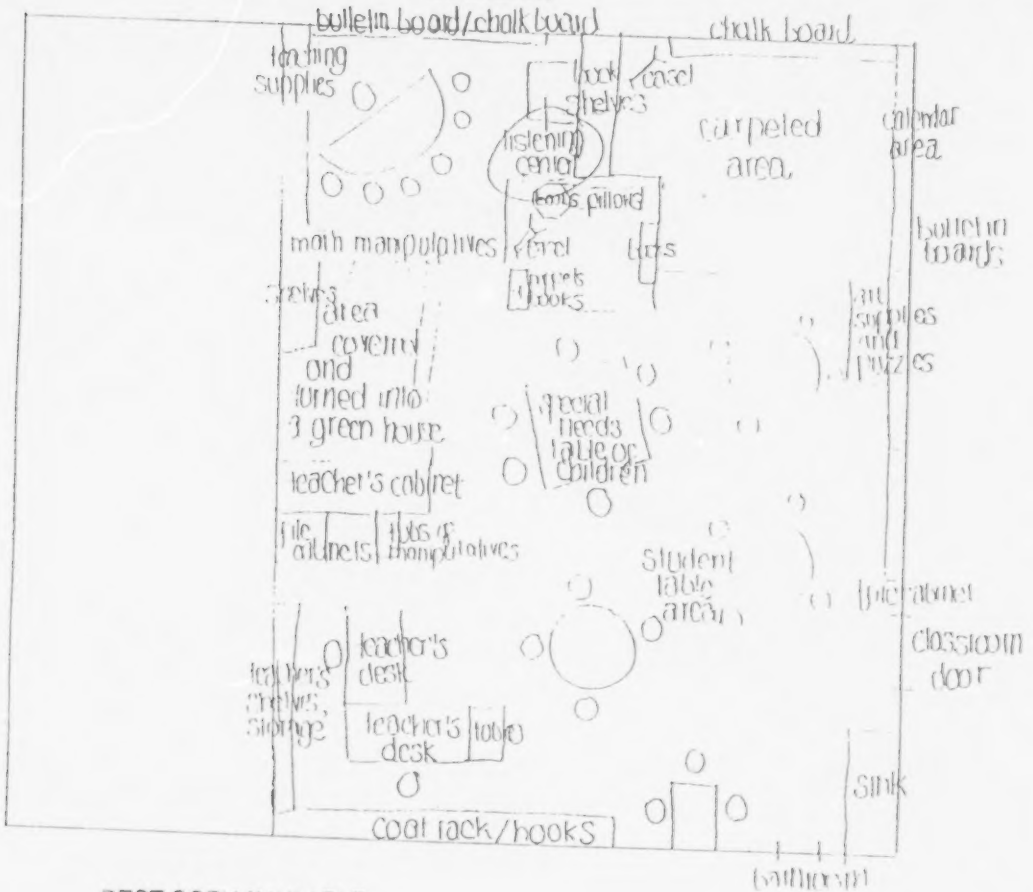
Age of Special Needs Child 6 I.E.P. ✓ yes ___ no

Special Needs Area Severe Speech Impairment

Additional Information

Adaptations:
1. Special corner for working with special needs children w/ visual blocker from other students
2. small class / group size
3. teacher's aide
4. taped stories
5. Language master
6. tables shaped like kidneys so kids don't have to be right across from each other

CLASSROOM



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APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM WEB FORM

CURRICULUM WEB FORM

Kind of Classroom _____

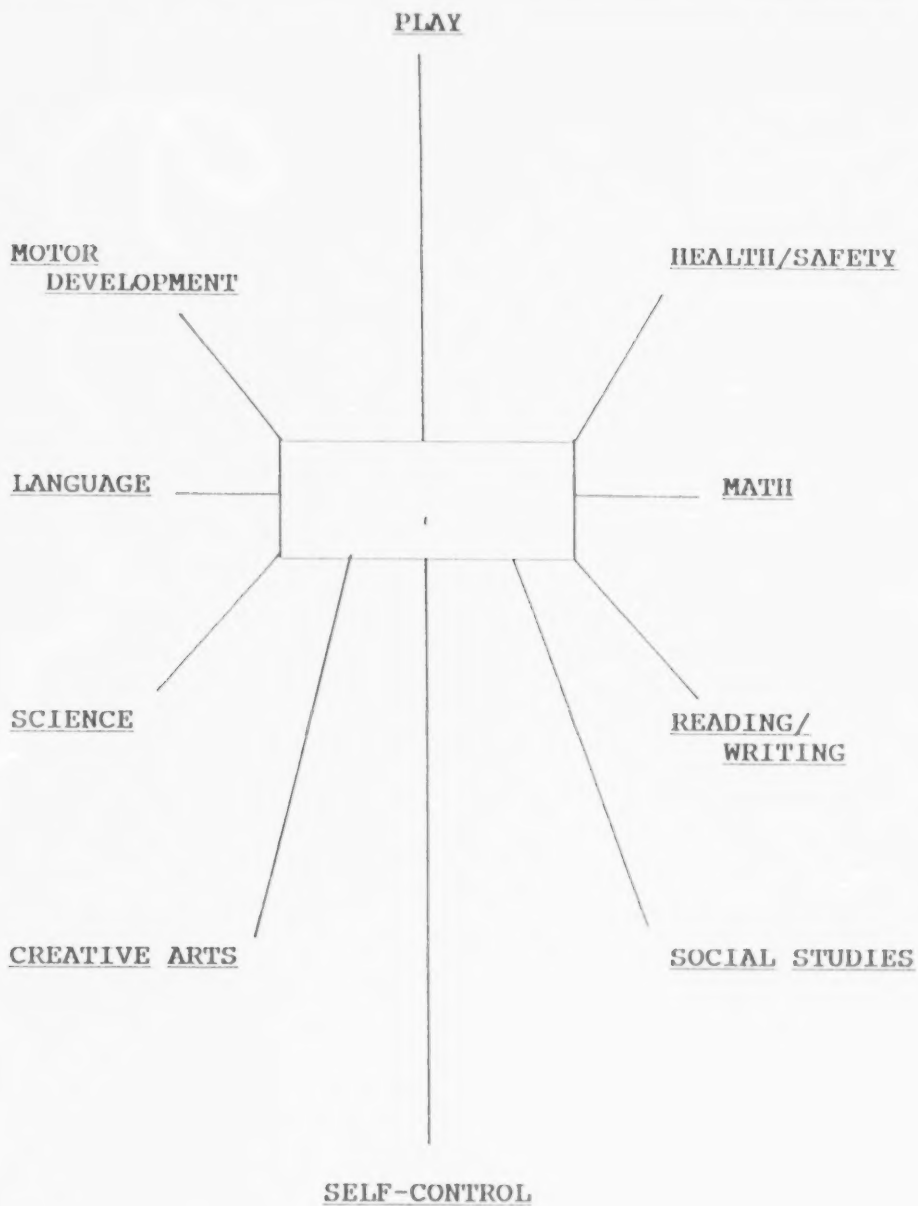
Age of Special Needs Child _____ I.E.P. ___yes
___no

Special Needs Area _____

Additional Information for Curriculum Modification

_____

_____

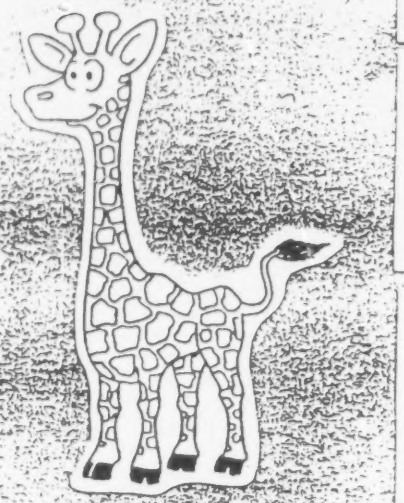


APPENDIX D

CURRICULUM WEB EXAMPLE

MODIFIED CURRICULUM WEB EXAMPLE

Giraffes



MATH

Create a graphing paper that compares humans and giraffes. Have a horizontal graph coming from the left side of the paper. Two lines would be designated as human and giraffe and titled a certain characteristic. The numbers would go along the bottom. You would then help the children color in the correct number for the giraffe and for the human. You could use any of the following characteristics:

1) Height of vegetation it can reach
2) Number of bones in neck (G - same # as human - just a lot longer)
3) Weight (G - 2 tons)
4) Height (G- 17 feet)
5) Gestation Period (G- 14-15 months)
6) Weight of a baby (G- 100-150 lbs.)
7) How fast they can run (G - 32 mph)
8) Average years of life (G - 20 years)
9) How much food they can eat in one day (G - 75 lbs.)

Use this to compare, contrast, learn graphing, and talk about more than/less than.

LANGUAGE

Read the book *Cecily G. And the Nine Monkeys* by H.A. Rey (Houghton, 1942). It's a picture book about a lonely giraffe and her funny adventures with nine homeless monkeys. Learn new words out of the book such as cows, calves, Acacia tree, Africa, and herd. Have the words written on a piece of paper and run off enough copies for the entire class. Have them draw a picture of each word and pronounce each of the words as they turn their paper into you.

PLAY

Pretend to be giraffes. Make your hands the giraffe's head, and eat fake trees around the room or on the playground. Have a pretend lake, or even a small swimming pool to pretend to drink from. Show the children how the giraffe drinks by spreading his front legs wide apart.

SCIENCE

Teach the children about camouflage. Show them pictures of giraffes and their spots and squiggles. These spots help the giraffes hide. In fact, when the giraffe goes into a bunch of trees, the spots on its body blend with the leaves. It's very difficult to see when it's hiding. Have a set of pictures or a book that shows animals, their different coats, and different places they can hide.

BIBLE

Read the story, *Helga High Up* by Marjorie Sharmat (Scholastic, 1986). This is a picture book in which everyone thinks Helga the giraffe is a snob because she seems to be so high and mighty. When she sees a robbery in an upper-story window, people change their minds about Helga. Have a class discussion about how God made us all unique with special characteristics and strengths so we would not all be the same. Talk about how we need our gifts and other people's gifts. Discuss looking for good characteristics in other people and the special way God made them.

ART/MUSIC/DRAMA

Act out a "Day in the Life of a Giraffe." Have one or two children pretend to be lions. Have the rest of the class pretend to be giraffes and remind them that they are very quiet animals that don't interfere much with other animals and tend to mind their own business. Have the morning a busy time of eating and drinking. In the heat of the afternoon have them sleep standing up. Have a lion in the area and talk about what the giraffe would do to protect itself. Then have the giraffes eating and drinking again in the evening.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH/SAFETY

Giraffes have very long necks. They are usually more than 6 feet long, but they still have only seven bones in their neck, the same number that we have. Talk about safety before jumping into water. Tell the kids that they must make sure the water is deeper than they are tall so they will not hurt their necks. Also talk about falling off playground equipment and how to protect their heads and necks. In addition, you can discuss the importance of wearing bicycle helmets.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Look up Africa on the map. Show them pictures of the kind of place giraffes live (their habitat). Talk about grasslands and the types of plants that a giraffe eats. Tell the children that giraffes prefer places where there are lots of scattered trees and bushes. Hold up pictures of other animals from Africa and then from other countries. Discuss the type of habitat they live in (desert, polar region, forest, etc.). Using pictures, have a center, game, or activity where the children can match an animal to its habitat.

READING/WRITING

The largest male giraffes are 17 feet tall. Help your students conceptualise 17 feet by marking it out on the side of the building or the classroom. You could also show them a tree or building that is about 17 feet tall. Discuss with the class what it would be like to be 17 feet tall. Have them make up stories about what a day in their lives would be like if they were as tall as a giraffe. Have them draw a picture of their story, and then go to each child individually and write down what they say their picture is about. Have those children who want to share their story about being 17 feet tall tell their story to the whole class. Ask: How would the world look to them? What would they do that they can't do now? What couldn't they do?

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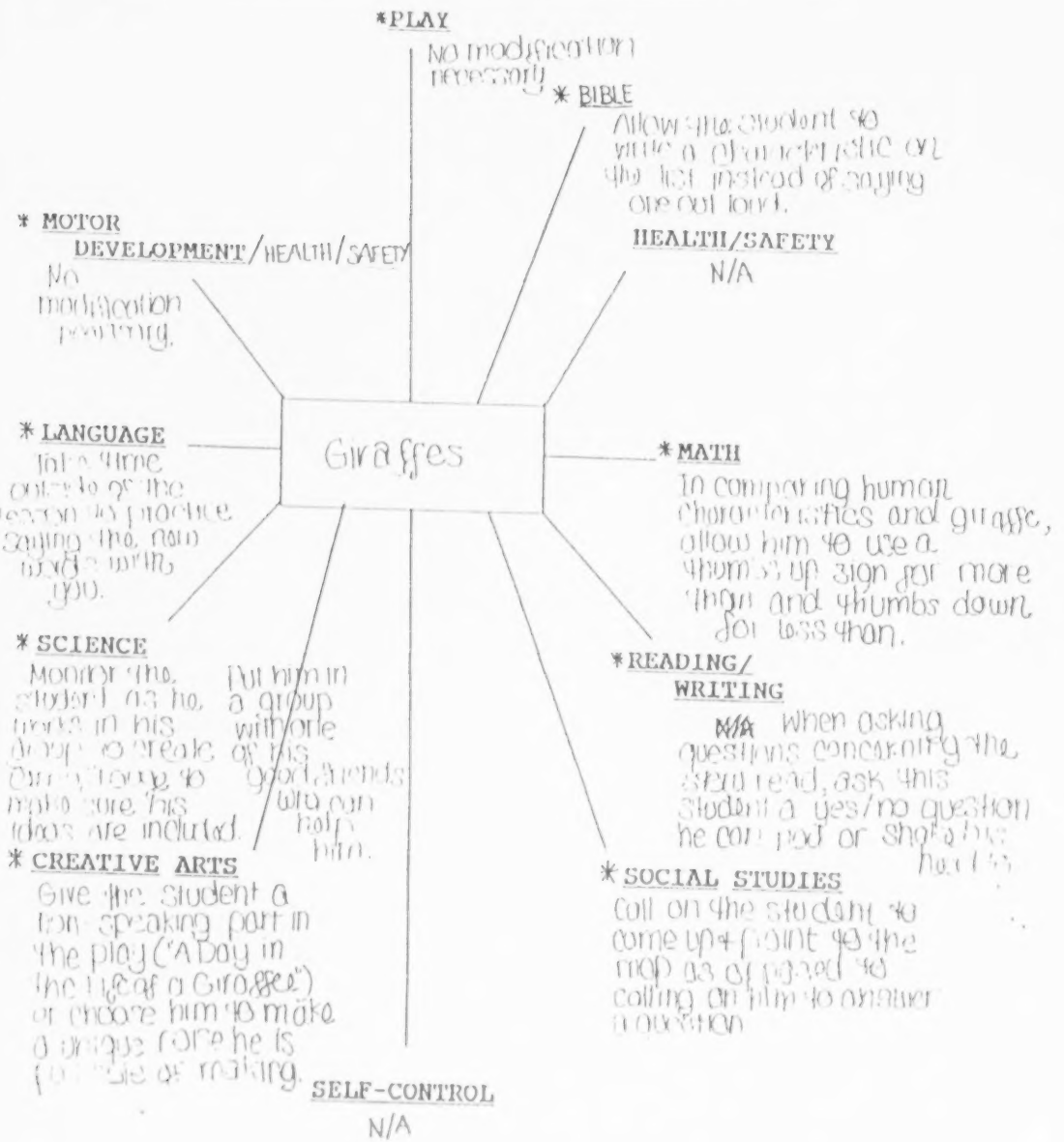
CURRICULUM WEB FORM

Kind of Classroom Extended Day Inclusion Kindergarten

Age of Special Needs Child 6 I.E.P. ✓ yes ___ no

Special Needs Area Severe Speech Impairment

Additional Information for Curriculum Modification


Giraffes
*PLAY
No modification necessary
* BIBLE
Allow the student to write a characteristic of the list instead of saying one out loud.
HEALTH/SAFETY
N/A
* MOTOR DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH/SAFETY
No modification necessary.
* LANGUAGE
Take time out to do the lesson to practice saying the, and work with you.
*MATH
In comparing human characteristics and giraffe, allow him to use a thumbs up sign for more than and thumbs down for less than.
* SCIENCE
Monitor the student as he works in his group to make sure he is participating to make sure his ideas are included.
Put him in a group with one of his good friends who can help him.
*READING/ WRITING
N/A When asking questions concerning the story read, ask this student a yes/no question he can nod or shake his head to
* CREATIVE ARTS
Give the student a ton speaking part in the play ("A Day in the Life of a Giraffe") or create him to make a unique face he is
* SOCIAL STUDIES
Call on the student to come up & point to the map as directed to calling on him to answer a question
SELF-CONTROL
N/A

APPENDIX E

INSTRUCTION PLAN OUTLINE

INSTRUCTION PLAN OUTLINE

Kind of Classroom _____

Age of Special Needs Child _____ I.E.P. ___yes
___no

Special Needs Area _____

Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Report Information

Type of Meeting _____ Date _____

Team Members 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____

Instructional Area _____

Instructional Objectives
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Week One
Objective _____
Materials/Resources _____
Procedure _____

Evaluation _____

Week Two
Objective _____
Materials/Resources _____
Procedure _____

Evaluation _____

Week Three
Objective _____
Materials/Resources _____
Procedure _____

Instructional Plan Evaluation ___yes___no
Date/Location/Time of Interdisciplinary Team Meeting
Date _____ Location _____ Time _____

APPENDIX F

INSTRUCTION PLAN EXAMPLE

INSTRUCTION PLAN OUTLINE

Kind of Classroom Special - 25 children in class

Age of Special Needs Child 6 I.E.P. ___yes ✓no

Special Needs Area Hearing Impaired

Interdisciplinary Team Meeting Report Information

Type of Meeting Team Date 03/12/96

Team Members 1. Principal 2. School psychologist
3. Myself 4. speech therapist
5. Parent 6. physical therapist

Instructional Area

Instructional Objectives
1. Gross motor skills
2. Speech
3. Play

Week One
Objective Meet together to discuss problems & solutions
Materials/Resources Records kept by teacher, therapists
Procedure Basic plan in keeping records from all team members - Notice the effect of special need with child in relating to others
Evaluation Child seems to be frustrated & uncooperative when others can't understand

Week Two
Objective Review of last week
Materials/Resources
Procedure Discussion of signs & how to use it in class - Parents, Child Teacher use sign language
Evaluation Child knows sign language Teach knows as well implement with talking voices in class

Week Three
Objective Make a decision concerning child
Materials/Resources records of classes work from team members
Procedure outline staff decisions or plan review implementation Class enjoyed the idea of sign short words - ex their name as an introduction

Instructional Plan Evaluation ✓ yes ___ no
Date/Location/Time of Interdisciplinary Team Meeting
Date 03/12/96 Location ___ Time 3:00

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APPENDIX G

OBSERVATION FORM FOR LESSON PLAN

OBSERVATION FORM FOR LESSON PLAN

Steps to Purposeful Evaluation

	ACTION	REFLECTION
UNDERSTAND	Child Development	Do I understand the characteristics of a child this age and stage of development? Do I need to do some professional reading or consult a professional to increase my understanding?
PLAN	What are you looking for to create or select an effective record-keeping device? When and where will you observe?	Will this record-keeping device capture the information I need? What situations will most likely yield the information I am looking for?
OBSERVE	What behaviors are releated to the established criteria? *The student in activities independent of the teacher *While interacting with the student *While using a "trial teaching" technique *What is the student doing and how is s/he doing it?	Am I sure this is what I see and not what I conclude? Does the student behave differently when I am working with him/her? Can the student tell me something about his/her behavior? Do I need to modify my interactions with the student to increase my understanding?
RECORD	Am I recording in precise detail the behavior observed? What are the circumstances related to the observed behaviors (e.g.environmental conditions, health factors)	Do I need to see the student in another situation? Is there anything else I need to look for now? Have I recorded anecdotal comments relative to my observations? How can I validate any hypothesis I have as a result of this observation?

Note. From Curriculum Considerations in Inclusive Classrooms: Facilitating Learning for All Students (p. 189), by S. Stainbeck and W. Stainbeck, 1992, P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Reprinted with permission.

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Observation

Kind of Classroom _____

Age of Special Needs Child _____ I.E.P. ___yes
___no

Special Needs Area _____

Four Facts for Lesson Plan Modification

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Evaluative Steps

1.Understand

2.Plan

3.Observe

4.Record

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan Instructional Area _____

Lesson Plan Objective _____

Materials/Resources _____

Procedure _____

Evaluation _____

APPENDIX H

OBSERVATION/LESSON PLAN EXAMPLE

Observation

Kind of Classroom Inclusive Kindergarten

Age of Special Needs Child 7 years I.E.P. X yes ___ no

Special Needs Area Multiple Handicap

Four Facts for Lesson Plan Modification

1. Will child in wheelchair be able to participate?
2. Must make sure child can see clearly
3. Have assistance ready for child
4. Is there a need to simplify material for child?

Evaluative Steps

1. Understand

I feel I understand the normal development for a child at this age, however I know I need to do some professional reading on children with multiple handicaps.

2. Plan

I plan on writing down actions and words. I plan to keep a daily chart to chart progress in verbal and motor skills.

3. Observe

I noticed the student tries less when I try and help. I'm trying not to do too much for her. I feel that I need a better understanding of this particular student.

4. Record

I have recorded precise detail, but am limited (in) time. I feel that to get an overall reliable record I must observe the student in other surroundings (gym, outdoors) and at other times.

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan Instructional Area Math

Lesson Plan Objective The students will be able to recognize and create an AB, AAB, ABB pattern.

Materials/Resources glue, shapes, paper, chart paper

Procedure After teaching the three patterns, students will choose two of the three patterns and make one on the front using glue and cut-out shapes, and then another on the back.

Evaluation Teacher will look at finished charts and observe how well students understand patterns. She can then see where students make mistakes

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APPENDIX I

ABSTRACT FORM

Abstract

APA Heading

Introduction

Method

Results

Discussion

Information from the Article on Curriculum Modification

APPENDIX J

ABSTRACT EXAMPLE

Abstract #2

APA Heading
Ziegler, Deborah A.(1995). Including a Child Who Has a Hearing Impairment. Scholastic Early Childhood Today, 16-17

Introduction
A kindergarten teacher is concerned about a child in her class with a hearing impairment. The author suggests ways to adapt the classroom and teaching to help him/her in physical, academic, and social ways.

Method
The author divided the information into two categories: classroom and teaching. She then gave four different areas in each category that could be adapted to help the child.

Results
The teacher should use clear visuals, good lighting, proper noise levels, and safety signals. He/she should also help with language skills, teaching other children about hearing problems, and interacting socially while drawing help from the parents and special-education personnel.

Discussion
This all seemed like extremely vital information every teacher should know. I liked using this to teach other children.

Information from the Article on Curriculum Modification
*By adding pictures and clear visuals to lessons, the child can have more understanding.
*Make sure your face is well lighted and use it to express what you are saying.
*Keep quiet and noisy activities apart. Use carpet, curtains, and material on the walls for better sound.
*Prepare an emergency signal like a waving flag to get the child's attention.
*Help the child work on communication skills by focusing on pronunciation, vocabulary, and complex sentences.
*Have the child share by teaching a lesson on hearing impairments.
*Send a journal back and forth to the child's parents so they know goals and outcomes.
*Get special-education people involved to see how they can help you.